

blame, in general, on scholastic principles. But again the inference deserves to be pressed; it is at the hands of the fathers, whom neither party in their heart of hearts yet holds in very high esteem, that the modern theologian and exegete should seek a reconciliation of their disciplines.

So we come again to that excellent last chapter, from which I will only quote the very just observations made on demythologising. 'The trouble with this kind of interpretation is twofold. First it is assumed that there was a single ancient world-view which can be reinterpreted wherever it appears in the new testament; similarly it is assumed that there is a single modern world-view, and that this world-view

is correct. Second, the biblical texts undergo a kind of metamorphosis as their more obvious historical meaning is transmuted into something more closely resembling the intention of the existentialist exegete . . . But the major difficulty which arises out of "demythologising" is that it tries to force on the passages more than they will bear, or should be expected to bear. The Bible is not the sole source of Christian theology, though it may be a primary one . . . The locus of "demythologising", then, lies not in biblical exegesis, but in the systematic theology of the Church, of which "biblical theology" is only a part' (p. 164-5).

EDMUND HILL, O.P.

THE BOY FROM THE LAKE, by Rosemary Haughton. *Darton, Longman and Todd, 18s.*

THE CARPENTER'S SON, by Rosemary Haughton. *Max Parrish, 25s.*

The role of the Bible in religious education has been subject to criticism recently in non-Catholic circles. It has become clear that a surfeit of Bible stories and an uncritical approach to the scriptures tend to stifle interest among children. Catholics, however, are very far from reaching any point of saturation with scripture and the urgent need is still to increase familiarity with the Bible. In spite of this difference in our situation we share with non-Catholics the need to consider carefully the relative merits and dangers of different ways of using the scriptures in religious education. Two different approaches are illustrated by two recent books, by Mrs Rosemary Haughton, who is well known as one of Britain's leading exponents of the biblical and theological renewal, both on the level of the child and of the adult. *The Boy from the Lake* is a valuable account of the coming of the New Creation as seen from the point of view of the young John the evangelist. It is aimed at the 8-11 year old age group and is absorbing and dramatic, and has vigorous black and white illustrations by the author herself.

She has the power of making readers feel that they are really there and involved in the incident described. While many adults could with profit read this book the style is suited to the needs of children without being over simplified. She keeps close to the scriptures while incorporating short explanations - without boring - where these are necessary.

It is, however, a pity that no attempt is made to deal with St John as an evangelist. It is very important that children should not be encour-

aged to fixate in a fundamentalist approach which appears as a natural stage in pre-adolescent years, but which must be outgrown if the adult Christian is to understand the word of God properly. The Fourth Gospel is a highly theological account and it is fruitless to attempt a chronological synchronisation with the synoptics: to say that 'later John could never remember in what order things happened' gives, by implication, a distorted impression of his gospel.

There is also a dubious identification of Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, with Mary Magdalen. This identification is not necessary for a proper telling of the story and theories without considerable backing from contemporary scriptural scholarship have no place in books for children.

Despite these defects *The Boy from the Lake* is an excellent means of handing on the 'good news' to children.

*The Carpenter's Son* is rather a puzzling book and quite unlike the author's other biblical works for children. It is evidently intended for children but although the style is often very simple its pace and subject is too heavy-going for most children of the 8-14 range, and the illustrations are dreary. In some respects it is an interesting book for adults, for it attempts to give both the background of Jewish life in the troubled times when Jesus was growing up, and also to describe the growth of wisdom and understanding of Jesus up to the finding in the Temple. As it entirely deals with the period not dealt with by the Gospels, between the return from Egypt and the finding in the

Temple, it is necessarily a work of the imagination, but it was not unintentional that the evangelists left this period alone. We do not know anything about the development of Christ's understanding of his nature and role at this stage and a fictional reconstruction has the danger, particularly for children, that a hypothetical picture is built up in the mind which is later retained as fact. The natural side is emphasized in this book and yet recent work on the scriptures has shown (such as the very interesting *Bible on the Childhood of Jesus* by Hermans) that Luke and Matthew, the two evangelists who dealt with this period, were concerned to emphasize Christ's divinity in

their choice and treatment of the annunciation and nativity episodes, etc.

Presumably in an effort to avoid preconceived ideas, Mrs Haughton has hidden the characters in her book by using Hebrew equivalents, which are either baffling or irritating, such as *Pesach* for 'passover', *Ysrohel* for 'Israel' and *Jeshua* for 'Jesus'.

The book does contain some very interesting material and is particularly strong in bringing out the relevance of Old Testament passages, but her earlier books dealing directly with the Old Testament were much more effective in communicating this to children.

IANTHE PRATT

THE SISTINE CHAPEL BEFORE MICHELANGELO: Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy, by L. D. Ettlinger. *Clarendon Press. Oxford University Press, 75s.*

The Sistine Chapel in the Vatican is known primarily through Michelangelo's Last Judgement. But between 1481 and 1483 Sixtus IV commissioned frescoes for it from Perugino, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Rosselli and Signorelle and it is still one of the major monuments of Quattrocento art. The iconography of these frescoes was examined exhaustively by Dr Ernst Steinmann in 1901: Dr Ettlinger writes 'Steinmann's interpretation of the Sistine frescoes is at least partly the result of an historical outlook which saw in the Renaissance essentially a wordly movement. From such a point of view it was indeed possible to propose in all seriousness that the frescoes in the most important Chapel of the Vatican palace were little more than allegories praising the achievements of its founder and immortalizing his name'. I would agree with Steinmann. Sixtus IV would seem to have been one of the most personally megalomaniac of Popes. When he

rebuilt the hospital of Santo Spirito he covered the walls with representations of his life and exploits and all his building activities were carefully accompanied by inscriptions; he delighted to display the newly invented arms of Della Rovere. To Dr Ettlinger on the other hand 'the iconography was determined by the political thinking of the Curia' and 'demonstrates the theory of the primatus papae and the potestas ecclesiae'.

This is a work of ingenious, detailed and scholarly research. It is always stimulating even if it is not always convincing. It seems undeniable that Moses figures so prominently in the Sistine Chapel because he was conceived as the Old Testament type of the Pope but perhaps he was placed there primarily as the Old Testament type of Pope Sixtus IV. There are 44 plates.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

GALILEO: The man, his work, his misfortunes, by James Brodrick, S.J. *Geoffrey Chapman, 21s.*

Although we still lack an adequate biography of Galileo, his *Opere* are available in a fine modern edition and good secondary accounts exist of some aspects of his life and work. Fr Brodrick has drawn on these to present a brief popular sketch of a colourful figure with whom he sympathises but (unlike some writers) does not worship. His book has virtues but cannot be recommended for two reasons. First, Fr Brodrick lacks the necessary background in history of science. This shows itself in minor ways (Harvey did not discover the circulation

of the blood in 1628 (p. 16) but published in that year the discovery he had been teaching for a decade or so) and in major ways (Aristotle (p. 17) used 'first-class mathematics' and was 'a great pioneering astronomer, with nothing but his mathematics and his brilliant mind to help him'). Second, a better account at this level already exists in English, though possibly this is not known to Fr Brodrick: *Galileo and the scientific revolution* by L. C. Fermi and C. Bernardini.

MICHAEL HOSKIN